

CURRENT EVENTS RESEARCH TOPICS

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ECONOMICS – Economic Stimulus Legislation

TOPIC: The Obama Administration and Congress have agreed on a stimulus package to help the economy out of its slump, and President Obama has signed the bill. What are the major points in this package? What is the reaction of people to this package?

SEARCH TERMS: laws and economy

ECONOMICS - Australia's Response to the World Credit Crunch

TOPIC: Australia has added to its \$6.9 billion US economic stimulus plan in an attempt to save jobs and growth. What export shortfall is a partial cause of the hard times? How much are external economic conditions to blame for Australia's problems?

SEARCH TERMS: Australia AND stimulus plans

ENVIROMENT – Wildfires in Australia

TOPIC: The Australian state of Victoria exploded in bush fires when a prolonged drought combined with a record heat wave provided perfect conditions. It is thought these fires are the result of arson. How did this massive fire differ from the bush fires Australia normally gets? How much damage was done? Why was the fatality rate so high? Why would someone set fires in the first place?

SEARCH TERMS: Australia AND bush fires

SPORTS - Brett Favre

TOPIC: Star quarterback for the New York Jets Brett Favre has announced his retirement. What have been some high and low points in Brett Favre's career? What are some factors that are commonly seen in the career development of professional football players like Brett Favre?

SEARCH TERMS: Brett Favre

CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS – Election in Iraq

TOPIC: Provincial elections were held in Iraq. Unlike the last time these elections were held, the Sunnis participated fully. What party was the winner? How does this result differ from the last election?

SEARCH TERMS: Iraq AND elections

HEALTH – Peanut Contamination

TOPIC: The Peanut Corporation of America is being investigated for a salmonella outbreak caused by contaminated peanut products that came from one of their plants. What are the legal aspects of this case? What are some of the things that can cause contamination in processing food such as peanuts? What is the status of this company?

SEARCH TERMS: Peanut Corporation of America AND salmonella

SOCIAL STUDIES RESEARCH TOPICS

CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS – Eric Holder

TOPIC: Eric Holder has been sworn in as the new Attorney General. What does the Attorney General of the United States do? What were some issues that came up during Attorney General Holder's congressional confirmation? What other positions has Attorney General Holder had in government?

SEARCH TERMS: Eric Holder

CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS - Fighting ends in Gaza

TOPIC: Israel declared a ceasefire and withdrew its troops from Gaza, and Hamas remains in control of the government. Did the Israeli military action succeed? What were the Israeli war aims?

SEARCH TERMS: Gaza AND Israel

CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS – A New Leader in Iceland

TOPIC: Persistent demonstrations by the Icelandic people have led to the resignation of Prime Minister Geir Haarde. Who will replace him? What was the cause of his government's downfall? What policies will the new government pursue?

SEARCH TERMS: Iceland AND government

CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS – Elections in Israel

TOPIC: Parliamentary elections were held in Israel with close results. How many parties competed in this election? Which party was the apparent winner? Who is likely to become Prime Minister?

SEARCH TERMS: Israel AND Knesset AND elections

CIVICS, GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS - Israeli Elections

TOPIC: This year's Israeli election to decide the next Prime Minister is gridlocked in a tight race between Likud Party Leader Benjamin Netanyahu and the Kadima Party's candidate, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni. What is the Israeli political process to resolve the gridlock? What are the policies and the political histories of the Likud Party and the Kadima Party?

SEARCH TERMS: Israel AND elections

CRIME AND LAW – Guantanamo Bay Detainees Relocation

TOPIC: President Obama has set a timetable to close Guantanamo Bay. Why does the president want to close Guantanamo Bay? What plans have been made for the detainees to be relocated? What issues are being raised by states involved in their relocation?

SEARCH TERMS: Guantanamo Bay AND detainees AND prison

ECONOMICS – Job Losses

TOPIC: The U.S. is experiencing its steepest rise in unemployment since the early 1980s. What states have been hit the hardest and why? What industries have been hit the hardest and why?

SEARCH TERMS: jobs AND recession

ECONOMICS – Fair Wage Legislation

TOPIC: President Obama has signed into law the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. Who was Lilly Ledbetter and how does this legislation address the issues that Ms. Ledbetter faced? What issues were the most hotly debated in the bill and why?

SEARCH TERMS: wages AND legislation

ECONOMICS – Iceland's Fall from Economic Grace

TOPIC: Iceland's government was forced to fully nationalize and declare bankrupt three of the country's biggest banks. What are the specific reasons blamed for the banks' failures? How is this causing trouble for citizens? Why is Iceland considered an unlikely country to have such severe economic troubles?

SEARCH TERMS: Iceland AND banks AND bankruptcy

EDUCATION – Annotated Nazi Newspapers

TOPIC: British publisher Peter McGee is reprinting and annotating German newspapers from the Nazi era. Who wants to ban their publication and why? What educational purpose could be served, and how are publishers going about it? Are there limits to free speech in Germany?

SEARCH TERMS: Nazis AND newspapers

EDUCATION – State Teacher Reviews

TOPIC: States are not doing enough to keep good teachers and remove bad ones according to a recent study by The National Council on Teacher Quality. What states rank highest and lowest and why? What criteria were used in evaluating the way states manage teachers, and why was that criteria applied?

SEARCH TERMS: teachers AND ratings AND states

HISTORY – Black History Month

TOPIC: Just weeks after the nation's first black President of the United States has taken office, this year's Black History Month will have a lot to celebrate. What were some major milestones in the history of the struggle of African-Americans to secure their civil rights? What were some of the major setbacks?

SEARCH TERMS: African-Americans AND history

HISTORY – Ancient Chemical Warfare

TOPIC: Archaeologists have found the earliest example of chemical warfare at a site in the Syrian desert. Who was fighting and why? How could scientists prove that chemical warfare was the cause of death?

SEARCH TERMS: Syria and Ancient Rome

HISTORY – Gold Coin Hoard discovered in Britain

TOPIC: The largest hoard of prehistoric gold coins found in Britain was recently announced. When do archaeologists feel the coins date from? What do they believe led to the burial of them? Where was the discovery made, and what was the importance of this excavation?

SEARCH TERMS: England AND Iron Age

SOCIAL ISSUES – Turks in Germany

TOPIC: Over two million people of Turkish origin live in Germany. Where do they live? Why have the Turks settled in Germany? What religious and ethnic groups are represented? What obstacles, if any, inhibit their integration?

SEARCH TERMS: Germany AND Turks

SOCIAL ISSUES – Mail Delivery

TOPIC: The U.S. Postal Service is exploring the option of cutting days from mail delivery. Why is this option being explored? What process is necessary before the Post Office can do this? What would be some of the positive and negative impacts of this change in service?

SEARCH TERMS: U.S. Postal Service

SCIENCE AND HEALTH RESEARCH TOPICS

ENVIRONMENT – Mount Redoubt

TOPIC: Scientists were monitoring a rumbling in Alaska’s Mount Redoubt in anticipation that the volcano will soon be erupting. What are the specifics of the process in which a volcano is monitored and eruptions forecasted? What has been the history of this volcano’s activity?

SEARCH TERMS: Alaska AND volcano

ENVIRONMENT – Stopping a Plague

TOPIC: The population of army worms in Liberia has exploded, threatening food crops and the rest of West Africa if they can’t be stopped. What do these caterpillars eat? How do they pollute water supplies? What can be done to stop them?

SEARCH TERMS: Liberia AND army worms

ENVIRONMENT - Whaling and Japan

TOPIC: The International Whaling Commission has proposed a compromise that would allow limited whaling in Japan’s coastal waters, but would phase out whaling in the Southern Ocean. Why did the IWC propose this? What was Japan’s response? How did environmentalists feel about the compromise?

SEARCH TERMS: Japan AND whaling

HEALTH – Debate over British Government’s Fight against Obesity

TOPIC: The British government has launched a public awareness campaign intended to promote physical fitness and curb obesity. What are some of the ways the government hopes to influence the public? Why is there a negative reaction to some aspects of this campaign?

SEARCH TERMS: England AND diet AND lifestyles

HEALTH – Chinese Father Rallies Parents in Tainted-Milk Scandal

TOPIC: A father of one of the children poisoned in last summer’s milk contamination scandal is leading a campaign against the compensation package backed by the Chinese government. What are the primary reasons that led the father to organize opposition to the plan? How many babies are estimated to have been affected by the toxic milk? Why are the long-term effects of the poisoning feared?

SEARCH TERMS: China AND tainted-milk

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY – First Stem-Cell Study for Spinal Injury

TOPIC: A US biotech company has approved the world’s first embryonic stem-cell study for a spinal injury. What have been some barriers to advancing embryonic stem-cell research? How are stem-cells used in this type of research?

SEARCH TERMS: stem cells AND United States

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY - Iran enters the space age

TOPIC: Iran launches its Omid (Hope) satellite into orbit from a Safir-2 rocket. Why is this a matter of concern to the international community? How has Iran responded to these concerns?

SEARCH TERMS: Iran AND satellites

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY – Oetzi, the Iceman

TOPIC: New research on Oetzi has determined that his death was caused by a flint arrow, not from exposure. Oetzi is the Ice Age mummy found in the Alps. What research was done to determine his cause of death?

What else has this ancient body told us?

SEARCH TERMS: Oetzi AND research

SPORTS RESEARCH TOPICS

SPORTS – Does Skiing Need Speed Limits?

TOPIC: European ski resorts are feeling pressure from both the insurance industry and emergency medical services to reduce the number of injuries. Why are speed limits being called for? What are some of the factors involved in the recommendation for speed limits? How are the authorities trying to make skiing safer?

SEARCH TERMS: skiing AND accidents

SPORTS – Super Bowl XLIII

TOPIC: The Pittsburgh Steelers have defeated the Arizona Cardinals to win Super Bowl XLIII. What plays made this Super Bowl unusually exciting for a football game? What record did the Pittsburgh Steelers break with this win?

SEARCH TERMS: Pittsburgh Steelers AND Arizona Cardinals AND Super Bowl

SPORTS - Nadal and Federer meet again

TOPIC: Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer played again in the finals of a major tennis tournament. How many times have they met in similar circumstances? Who is leading in their rivalry?

SEARCH TERMS: Australian Open AND tennis

SPORTS – Ingemar Johansson

TOPIC: Ingemar Johansson was the Swedish former World Heavyweight Boxing champion. Whom did he fight for the title? Who did he lose his title to? Did anyone else ever beat him?

SEARCH TERMS: Boxing AND Ingemar Johansson

SPORTS – 100 – 0 Game

TOPIC: The girls' basketball team of the Convent School of Dallas, Texas has beaten the Dallas Academy 100-0. What has been the reaction to the Convent School's blowout win? What are the overall issues being debated and discussed about the game?

SEARCH TERMS: Convent School AND Dallas Academy

ARTS AND LITERATURE RESEARCH TOPICS

FILM AND TELEVISION – Screen Actors Guild Awards

TOPIC: The Screen Actors Guild Awards ceremony has had to choose from a very strong field this year. Who were the big winners, and for what performances were they rewarded? What is the history of the Screen Actors Guild?

SEARCH TERMS: Screen Actors Guild Awards

FILM AND TELEVISION – BBC Under Fire

TOPIC: Under fire for its reporting from Gaza, the British Broadcasting Corp. decided not to air an appeal for funds to help rebuild Gaza. Why was the BBC criticized for its reporting? Why did it choose not to run the appeal? What was the public response?

SEARCH TERMS: BBC AND Gaza

FINE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE – Prado Artwork Online

TOPIC: Madrid's famed Prado Museum teams with Google Earth to make its artwork available on Google Earth. How is technology allowing art lovers to examine the art in minute detail? Why is the legendary museum embarking on this digital initiative?

SEARCH TERMS: Prado Museum AND Google Earth

FINE ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE – Design Competition for Black History Museum

TOPIC: Six award-winning architecture teams have been named to compete for the winning design of the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Who are some of the top architects, what buildings have they designed, and what signature styles are they known for? What are some of the goals the teams are competing for to reflect in their designs?

SEARCH TERMS: National Museum of African American History and Culture AND design

LITERATURE – John Updike

TOPIC: John Updike was a well-known author. What are some of Mr. Updike's most known books, and what literary qualities have been noted in them? What impact has Mr. Updike had on literature and why?

SEARCH TERMS: John Updike

LITERATURE – Robert Burns, Farmer and Poet

TOPIC: It has been 250 years since the birth of Scottish poet Robert Burns. Where and how is his life being celebrated? What is his significance in world literature? Is there a Burns' poem that you know?

SEARCH TERMS: Robert Burns AND Scotland

LITERATURE – 100 Years On, “Anne of Green Gables” Still Touches Japanese Hearts

TOPIC: In 1908 Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery wrote her classic book, which retains its popularity with readers worldwide. Why is the book so popular with Japanese readers? How have the Japanese adapted the story into other media? What are some of the ways the book's anniversary was celebrated in Japan?

SEARCH TERMS: Japan AND Anne of Green Gables

PERFORMING ARTS – Anniversary of Buddy Holly's Death

TOPIC: It's been 50 years since three of rock and roll music's pioneers, Buddy Holly, The Big Bopper and Ritchie Valens died in a plane accident. What significance did each performer have for the then-new musical genre? What famous song was written as a memorial to this tragedy?

SEARCH TERMS: Buddy Holly AND anniversaries

PEOPLE RESEARCH TOPICS

PEOPLE – Tom Daschle

TOPIC: Tom Daschle has removed himself from consideration as the Secretary of Health and Human Services. What controversy arose in his nomination? What are some highlights of Mr. Daschle's political career?

SEARCH TERMS: Tom Daschle AND nomination

PEOPLE – Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger

TOPIC: Commercial pilot for US Airways Sully Sullenberger is hailed as a hero for successfully landing a damaged plane on the Hudson River and, with his crew, seeing that all passengers got out alive. What caused the damage to the airplane and how common is this problem? What is the procedural breakdown of Mr. Sullenberger's actions that successfully landed the plane?

SEARCH TERMS: Sully Sullenberger

PEOPLE – The Angel of the Outback

TOPIC: Australians are mourning the passing of aviation pioneer Nancy Bird Walton. In addition to her gender, what else made her unique in Australia's aviation? Who was the famed pilot who gave Walton her first flying lessons?

SEARCH TERMS: Nancy Bird Walton

PEOPLE – Millard Fuller

TOPIC: Millard Fuller was the founder of Habitat for Humanity International. What is Habitat for Humanity? What did Mr. Fuller do before starting Habitat for Humanity? What progress has Habitat for Humanity made in securing homes for those in need?

SEARCH TERMS: Millard Fuller AND Habitat for Humanity